

members of the Nebraska Wheathearts, which is an organization over all the state, of course, and their names are...and would you ladies please stand, Nadine Free of McCook, Lorraine Haas of Hemingford, Nina Papik of Crete, Kim and Jane Elliot of Alliance, Jo Balsenberger of Bushnell. Would you ladies...would you please welcome these ladies to the Legislature. Thank you for your gift this morning and you ladies and gentlemen in the organization perhaps would like to thank them for it. Thank you for visiting us today. Move on to LR 50. But may I say that while the Legislature is in session and capable of transacting business, I propose to sign and do sign LR 44, LR 45, LR 46, LR 47, LR 48, LR 49, and that's it. All right, we'll move on to LR 50, please.

CLERK: Mr. President, LR 50 offered by Senators Hefner, Lowell Johnson, Warner, Moore, Langford and Bayer. It's found on page 1017 of the Journal. (Read brief description of LR 50.)

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) Ladies and gentlemen, may we please have your attention so we can proceed. Senator Hefner, please.

SENATOR HEFNER: LR 50 is a resolution to be sent to the Nebraska Congressional delegation and the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs. And you will find this on page 1017 if you want to read it. But what it does, it calls attention to budget cuts made in services offered by Veterans Administration Medical Centers. Budget cuts have been made in services offered by VA Medical Centers in the last few years. The cuts affect the services in two ways. The services offered by VA Medical Centers are being reduced and in some cases to the point that some centers may be closed and the number of veterans served is being reduced. Now Nebraska has three VA Medical Centers, Lincoln, Grand Island and Omaha, and all three have been affected by these cuts. These cuts have not reduced the medical needs of veterans, of course. If VA Centers are closed, veterans will be forced to seek medical care from other care facilities, many of which already are overburdened. In some cases, veterans have no insurance or may be ineligible for health insurance. The lack of insurance simply means that the cost of their care will be passed on to others in cases where they are unable to pay for their own health care costs. It is very unreasonable to expect anyone to pay for expensive health care without the aid of insurance or government assistance in the face of today's rising expensive health care costs. Prior to these budget cuts, veterans were assured their health needs